

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

PART I. Purpose of and Need for Action

1. Project Title: Great Falls Trap & Skeet Club

2. Type of Proposed Action: (1) Replace and relocate shotgun Pattern board
(2) Purchase three automatic trap machines
(3) Re-grade and Replace 270 feet of Sidewalk
(4) Install 7 connecting sidewalks to Trap Fields
(5) Install a 1500 gallon cistern
(6) Purchase three wireless voice calls

3. Location Affected by Proposed Action: Range improvements will occur on site of existing 30 year old range located at 183 Ulm North Frontage Rd., Ulm, MT. Two and one half miles north of Ulm on the frontage road and approximately six miles south of Great Falls on the same frontage road. 50.5 acres located in the SW ¼ NW ¼ of Sec. 34 & in the SE ¼ NE ¼ of Sec. 33; T20N, R2E P.M.M. Cascade County, Montana.

4. Agency Authority for the Proposed Action: MCA87-1-276 through 87-1-279 (Legislative established policies and procedures for the establishment and improvement of shooting ranges) MCA87-2-105 (Departmental authority to expend funds to provide training in the safe handling and use of firearms and safe hunting practices). The 2007 Montana Legislature has authorized funding for the establishment of a Shooting Range Development Program providing financial assistance for the development of shooting ranges for public purposes. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks has responsibility for the administration of the program, including the necessary guidelines and procedures governing applications for funding assistance under the program.

5. Need for the Action(s): (See paragraph 10) Increased operational capability with additional automatic trap machines. Improved environmental control, directing shot from patterning board on to range shot fall area. Increase handicapped accessibility with new major walkway and service sidewalks. Install a supply of safe reliable water supply for camper spots, and improve safety by eliminating a wired operations system on field.

6. Objectives for the Action(s): Improve handicap accessibility, provide improved safety, efficiency and reliability of range operations, and a safe reliable source of water for the camper area.

An aerial photograph of a land survey, oriented horizontally. The image is divided into several rectangular parcels by yellow lines. Handwritten annotations in black ink are present throughout the image. In the top-left area, there is a handwritten '1' and the number '40.7'. To its right, a '3' is written. In the top-center, a '2' is written above the number '14.8'. To the right of this, a '3' is written above the number '10.8'. In the top-right, a '4' is written above the number '27.4'. In the center, a '22.4' is written above the letters 'B & D'. To the right of this, a '6' is written above the letter 'E'. In the bottom-left, a '6.7' is written above the number '23.7'. To its right, a '3' is written above the number '3.9'. In the bottom-center, a '3' is written above the number '40.7'. In the bottom-right, a '3' is written above the number '3.9'. In the center-right, there are handwritten letters 'H I J' and 'A E' with arrows pointing to specific locations. In the bottom-right, there are handwritten letters 'F K' with arrows pointing to specific locations. The background is a greenish-brown aerial photograph showing some vegetation and a road or path running diagonally from the top-left to the bottom-right.

Farm:

Tract:

33,34

20N

2E

8. Project Size: Estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected: Range is approximately 50.5 acres, but improvements are limited to a much smaller area within the broader area of the range.

9. Affected Environment (A brief description of the affected area of the proposed project): The area affected is the existing 30 year old Great Falls Trap and Skeet Club on 50.5 acres approximately 2.5 miles north of Ulm, MT on the north or west side of Interstate Highway 15.

10. Description of Project:

- (1) Replace and relocate shotgun Pattern board so that shot passing through the paper target will fall on current range shot recovery area.
- (2) Purchase three automatic trap machines for installation in pre-existing trap houses without traps.
- (3) Re-grade and Replace 270 feet of Sidewalk which has a 4' dip that collects water and presents a hazard to shooters in electric wheel chairs.
- (4) Install 7 connecting sidewalks to Trap Fields and the main east-west walkway, improving handicapped access to all trap fields.
- (5) Install a 1500 gallon cistern to provide stored water for camper spots.
- (6) Purchase three wireless voice calls improving operations, maintenance and field safety.

11. List any Other Local, State, or Federal Agency that has Overlapping or Additional Jurisdiction:

(a) Permits, Licenses and/or Authorizations:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Permit</u>
None Required	

Funding:

<u>Agency Name</u>	<u>Funding Amount</u>
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	\$10,995

12. Affiliations, Cooperating Agencies, User Groups and/or Supporting Groups:

Cascade County Sheriff's Department, the Great Falls Police Department, Montana Highway Patrol, Boy Scouts, Air Force and Army National Guard, retriever club, hunter's education, 4-H, etc.

13. History of the Planning and Scoping Process, and Any Public Involvement: Proposed range improvements and safety enhancements had been discussed within the membership of the club and with the associated project vendors and contractors. No public involvement was deemed necessary.

14. List of Agencies Consulted/Contacted During Preparation of the EA:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

15. Name, Address and Phone Number of Project Sponsor:

James W. Burman
2398 Old US Highway 91
Cascade, MT 59421
(406) 468-2751
jwjlburman@aol.com

16. Other Pertinent Information:

Shooting range applications require the participant's governing body to approve by resolution its submission of applications for shooting range funding assistance. Resolution Date: March 7, 2007.

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Abbreviated Checklist - The degree and intensity determines extent of Environmental Review. An abbreviated checklist may be used for those projects that are not complex, controversial, or are not in environmental sensitive areas)

Table 1. Potential impact on physical environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources				X		
2. Terrestrial or aquatic life and/or habitats				X		#2
3. Introduction of new species into an area				X		
4. Vegetation cover, quantity & quality				X		
5. Water quality, quantity & distribution (surface or groundwater)				X		#5
6. Existing water right or reservation				X		
7. Geology & soil quality, stability & moisture				X		
8. Air quality or objectionable odors				X		
9. Historical & archaeological sites				X		
10. Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air & energy				X		
11. Aesthetics				X		

Comments (A description of potentially significant, or unknown, impacts and potential alternatives for mitigation must be provided.)

2. & 5. There are no live streams or ponds on the site and no delineated wetlands.

Table 2. Potential impacts on human environment.

Will the proposed action result in potential impacts to:	Unknown	Potentially Significant	Minor	None	Can Be Mitigated	Comments Below
1. Social structures and cultural diversity				X		
2. Changes in existing public benefits provided by wildlife populations and/or habitat				X		
3. Local and state tax base and tax revenue				X		
4. Agricultural production				X		#4
5. Human health				X		#5
6. Quantity & distribution of community & personal income				X		
7. Access to & quality of recreational activities				X		#7
8. Locally adopted environmental plans & goals (ordinances)				X		
9. Distribution & density of population and housing				X		
10. Demands for government services				X		
11. Industrial and/or commercial activity				X		

Comments (A description of potentially significant, or unknown, impacts and potential alternatives for mitigation must be provided.)

4. The site is adjacent to surrounding agricultural land.

5. Range site plans, construction and the ongoing operational and maintenance plans meet the standards of safety for the range participants and the public at large.

7. Range will provide year round controlled access and fulfils a need for a range to accommodate law enforcement training, hunter education, bow-hunter safety, and public shooting.

Part III. Environmental Consequences

Does the proposed action involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely harmful if they were to occur? No

Does the proposed action have impacts that are individually minor, but cumulatively significant or potentially significant? No

Identification of the Preferred Alternatives:

- **Alternative A** is as described in paragraph 10 (Description of Project)
 - (1) Replace and relocate shotgun Pattern board
 - (2) Purchase three automatic trap machines
 - (3) Re-grade and Replace 270 feet of Sidewalk
 - (4) Install 7 connecting sidewalks to Trap Fields
 - (5) Install a 1500 gallon cistern
 - (6) Purchase three wireless voice calls
- **Alternative B (No Action Alternative)** area will remain as an active trap and skeet range using without additional trap machines, sidewalks, wireless voice call systems, cistern, and without relocating the shotgun pattern board.

Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a discussion of how the alternatives would be implemented:

Two alternatives have been considered, A (Proposed Alternative) and B (No Action Alternative). There were no other alternatives that were deemed reasonably available, nor prudent.

Neither the proposed alternative (A) nor the no action alternative (B) would have any significant negative environmental or potentially negative consequences.

- There are beneficial consequences for the acceptance of alternatives **A** to Improve handicap accessibility, provide improved safety, efficiency and reliability of range operations, and a safe reliable source of water for the camper area.
- The No Action Alternative would be not to improve the range and continue on with present shooting activities. Land use would remain the same. Present activities include trap, skeet, 5 stand, rifle and pistol shooting without the improved safety and improvements. Therefore the proposed alternative is the prudent alternative.

Describe any Alternatives considered and eliminated from Detailed Study:

None

List and explain proposed mitigative measures (stipulations):

None

Individuals or groups contributing to, or commenting on, this EA:

Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks

Jim Burman, Great Falls Trap and Skeet Club

PART IV. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT

All of the pertinent or potential impacts of the project have been reviewed, discussed, and analyzed. None of the project reviewed were complex, controversial, or located in an environmentally sensitive area. The projects being proposed are on properties owned by the Great Falls Trap and Skeet Club. The low impact activities proposed and the increased recreational opportunity indicates that this should be considered the final version of the environmental assessment. There are no significant environmental or economic impacts associated with the proposed alternative (A). The 30 year history of the Great Falls Trap and Skeet Club providing shooting opportunities to its members and the public, indicates support for the proposed alternative. Therefore, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks should approve the proposed alternative (A) for the Great Falls Trap and Skeet Club range improvements as outlined in para. 2 & 10.

EA prepared by: GENE R. HICKMAN

Ecological Assessments

Helena, MT 59602

Date Completed: July 16, 2007

PART V. EA CONCLUSION SECTION

Recommendation and justification concerning preparation of EIS:

None Required

Describe public involvement, if any:

None